

How to Make Your Grant Application Accessible

1. Use Accessible and Inclusive Language

Avoid terms like “special needs”, “handicapped”, “wheelchair bound”, “differently abled” or other euphemisms for “disabled”.

Opt for person-first language, such as “person with a disability”, “people who are blind or visually impaired”, etc.

Keep writing simple and concise, avoiding jargon and technical terms when possible.

2. Offer Clear Instructions

Provide step-by-step instructions on how to complete the application.

Include contact information for accessibility-related questions.

3. Provide Alternative Formats

Offer the application in multiple formats, such as plain text, PDF, and accessible Word documents.

Include image descriptions or accessible alternatives for visual content like charts and graphs.

4. Use Accessible Document Formatting

Ensure proper structures are used for headings, lists, and styles.

Provide alt text for images and graphics.

Use a simple, readable font and appropriate font size (e.g., at least 14pt).

Avoid using tables to convey information.

5. Test with Assistive Technology

Test your application with screen readers and other assistive technologies to identify and address issues.

6. Provide Generous Timelines

Offer a longer application period to accommodate those who may need extra time due to disabilities.

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7. Offer Assistance

Provide contact information to applicants who need assistance with the application process.

Consider offering webinars or training sessions on completing the application.

8. Ensure Digital Accessibility

Ensure your online application portal and website are designed to meet web accessibility standards.

9. Accept Alternative Submission Methods

Be open to different formats for submission (e.g., email, mail, or video applications).

Consider granting reasonable accommodations for applicants who request them.

10. Provide an Accessibility Statement

Include an accessibility statement on your application website, outlining your commitment to accessibility accommodations for applicants with disabilities.

11. Seek Feedback

Include an application question requesting feedback on the accessibility of your application process and make improvements accordingly.

12. Promote Accessibility

Include information about the accessibility of your grant application process in your grant guidelines and outreach materials.

Want more tips for inclusive grantmaking?

[Visit learnability.org](https://www.learnability.org)